



CANDLE AND CROSS

ELISABETH SCOLLARD

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CANDLE AND CROSS

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BY ELISABETH SCOLLARD



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ELISABETH SCOLLARD
1925

TO
MY MOTHER

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I WOULD HAVE A HEART THAT SINGS

THESE you may take from me:
Wealth with its mockery
And the myriad things of earth
That are of little worth,
The trifles and the fears,
The selfishness, the tears.
Take all false pride away,
It is but a toy of clay.
I would have a heart that sings
With the joy of simple things;
Let the melody of the wind
Thrill me, and let me find
New rapture every hour
In bird and bee and flower;
May the light on the snow-crowned hills
And the voices of hidden rills
Teach me that beauty bides
In the dreariest winter-tides.
Foster my faith in men
Till it shall rise again
Like incense on the air;
Grant me the peace of prayer,
And may I see His face
In every clime and place.

CANDLE AND CROSS



I WHO HAVE WALKED WITH BEAUTY



WHO have walked with Beauty will not
falter

Though drear may stretch the road
ahead, and long,

For I have seen on Time's eternal altar
Love's candle burning like some flaming song.

I who have walked with Wonder will not waver
Though many be the miseries I see;
I shall go forward fortified and braver
Who hold the jeweled sword of Memory.

I who have walked with Gladness will not tarry
Again with Sorrow, though she press me sore;
A cross of Joy shall be the cross I carry
Up through the years and on for evermore.

CONTENTMENT

I HAVE known pain,
Yet will I not complain
For I have walked to-day
A little way
With the one joy of all eternity,
And though I see
The ebon darkness of oncoming night
I have had light;
So will I lift my head
Nor dread
The lone road and the long,
For I have had companionship and song;
Whatever follows after
I have known laughter,
At Love's own table I have been a guest,
And I am blessed.

A GARDEN PRAYER

IN one familiar garden let me grow
Amid the sweetness of remembered things,
White lilies and a climbing rose that clings
To some old rustic arbor brown and low;
Still let me linger where the larkspur blow
Like blue sea-water that the storm wind flings
Upon white rain-swept beaches; my heart sings
With happiness amid these flowers I know.

Transplant me not, O Gardener, but let be
My intertwined roots in this one spot
Where the glad earth receives me, here for me
Are all my joys, my loves; transplant me not,
Lest spite of warmer soil and sunnier sky
In my great loneliness I pine and die!

BEREAVED

ALL winter did I steel my heart for this—
This day of April, blowing warm and sweet;
All winter I looked out upon the street,
And whispered to myself "You shall not miss
Ripple of laughter or a step you knew
That once went down this way"—alas! alas!
The little winds that sing along the grass,
The crocuses with lifted cups of blue—

Everything wakes old pain; spring came too soon,
My strength is turned to weakness at a tune,
Loved, but forgot, and flung upon the air
By passing youth; I dare not raise my eyes
Lest I should gaze out in the dooryard where
Your jonquils flutter like gold butterflies.

I MUST PUT BY MY DREAMS

I MUST put by my dreams to go
About the duties of the day,
Nor pause at hint of evenglow
To think how white the lilacs blow
In gardens far away.

I must put by my dreams to pass
By dim streets winding up and down,
Nor picture how, amid the grass,
The purple orchard violets mass
Full many a mile from town.

I must put by my dreams to walk
Ways which I never trod before,
Nor think how from each slender stalk
The lemon lilies lean and talk
Beside a well-loved door.

I must put by my dreams until
I do the tasks which wait my hand,
And then how sweet to take at will
The road that runs beyond the hill
Into the old home land!

TO AN OLD HOUSE

FOUR Aprils since they took me from your door
Just as the white narcissus came to bloom;
Four years ago they closed my little room
And said I could not enter any more;
New scenes, new faces, these must claim my gaze,
All of the things I loved should be forgot—
Obliterated, as if they were not,
No thought of what had been might touch my days.

They bore me far, to lands I did not know,
To houses grand, to folk called passing fair,
And thought with these I would be satisfied;
Little they guess how happily I go
To climb each night the lovely shining stair
Of dream, back to the life they have denied.

APRIL IN THE CITY

HER lyric laughter ripples down the street;
The echoing tread of feet
Goes surging by the door
As in the countless April tides of yore;
A tender touch of green
Amid the parks is seen,
And down the bay
The blue-gold flag of day
Has been unfurled across a height of sky;
A breeze drifts by
Bringing a hint of dancing daffodils
And some quaint garden where the sunlight spills
Its mellow loveliness; the tired streets sing
Beneath the magic of another spring;
And yet how much, how more than much they miss
Who know no other April day than this
Deep in the heart of town!
Theirs is no wonder of green sprung from brown,
Music of melting snows
Or song of wind that blows
Across far hills where blue-eyed violets wake;
They see no pine grove bordering a lake;
The tragedy is theirs who never trod
Paths made by God;
An artifice of spring is all they know
Here in the city's endless ebb and flow.

AN INTERLUDE

WHAT matter if to-morrow this shall pass
And seem but breath of bloom blown
down the wind,

A bit of beauty we may never find
Again, a violet hidden in the grass?
To-day we know the wonder of the hills,
The melody of breeze and bird and bee,
Of sapphire water singing to the sea,
Of fragrance the alfalfa flower distills.

Soon, soon again long leagues will lie between,
We shall walk separate paths companionless
To-morrow at the setting of the sun,
But now until the opal day is done
We share the glory of the gold and green,
To-day is ours to live with Loveliness.

A MEMORY OF MAY

THROUGHOUT the year my heart shall keep a
memory of May,

Because you let me share with you one brief exquisite day,
And lent me of your laughter that is golden as the sun;
Oh, I shall hear its melody until my days are done!

Each day shall be a May day in the garden of my heart,
Because of one glad day of yours you granted me a part,
And gave me your companionship for a few fleeting hours,
Now ever in my thought your words are springing up like
flowers.

Is there no way to thank you who have turned time to a
song?

Once Sorrow walked beside me and each minute seemed
too long,

But now I have a happiness which pain cannot alloy,
Because of you I may go forth—a comrade unto Joy.

THE PASSING OF MAY

AS soft as the recurrence of a rhyme
In some old love song of the cavaliers,
Lovelace or Suckling or their courtly peers,
Belovèd May seeks her last trysting time;
The wood-thrush notes are like a distant chime,
The dew is like the tender touch of tears
Upon the grasses as the twilight nears,
And the clear vesper star begins to climb.

Fading is not forgetting; all the gold
Of passing May will linger in our hold;
Memory's nectar her deep chalice fills
For our heart's treasure, though we hear her
breath,
As the low tone of midnight echoeth,
Dying and dying and dying among the hills.

LILACS

TO-DAY along the gray streets of the town
The flower-venders wander up and down.

Some offer pansy, rose or violet,
And those who pause in passing half forget

The city that is surging like a sea
About them with a dull monotony.

I come to one who shows me plume on plume
Of fragrant white and purple lilac bloom.

Little he guesses as I take a spray
That for me all the loveliness of May

Hides in this flower whose scent can bear me far
Down country ways where other lilacs are

Blowing along the western wall above
A garden which I used to know and love—

There drifts again fraught with the old-time pain
The perfume of these blossoms in the rain—

How they would glimmer through the veil of mist
Woven of silver and of amethyst!

I pay my trifling sum; I cannot tell
The man who has these bits of bloom to sell

That he has parted with the priceless key
Which can unlock the door of Memory.

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF YOU KNEW

SOMETIMES I wonder if you knew
That every little word
You said would come to sing to me
As might a bird.

And did you think the road we took
Across the yesterday
Would wind forever through my heart
That selfsame way?

Each time you smiled did you suppose
When sunlight touched the blue
I should look up in after years
And think of you?

I NEVER SAW ONE TOUCH OF BEAUTY HERE

I NEVER saw one touch of Beauty here
In this great city; all was grim and gray
Until I found you; now each sordid way
Reflects both life and joy, no longer drear;
Seen through your eyes its streets are full of cheer;
Loveliness lurks in every dismal day;
The very pavements seem to catch a ray
Of light from you, and cease to be austere.

It is as though you set my spirit free,
Lifted my thought to higher, holier things
And filled the hours with song and banished care;
Through you Christ comes again to walk with me,
Because of you my sad heart sings and sings,
And life becomes a hymn of praise and prayer.

THE QUESTIONING HEART

IS there a road down which his lithesome feet
Did not go dancing, like bright leaves in fall,
Blown by faint gusts of wind that seemed to call
With voices echoing a music fleet?
Is there a prayer his lips did not repeat,
Or any flower that blossomed by the wall
Which he saw not, a deed, however small
He did not do, if it made life more sweet?

If there is one, I pray you, tell it me,
That I may think of it, not of these things
Which burn me with the flaming memory
Of one dear face nor time nor change can dim.
For with each dawn new recollection springs;
Each night holds but another dream of him.

THE DIFFERENCE

A WHITE house on a bare bleak hill,
And up along the misty lane
Two willows tossing in the rain
That fell about them thin and chill.

These things I saw but yesterday
Before you took this path with me;
To-day what is it that I see
As I go down this windy way?

A spacious house of gleaming white
Set on a warm brown hill, a lane
Spangled with silver stars of rain,
Two willows pale as candle light.

THE CITY THINKS OF YOU

THE city thinks of you, now you are gone,
And listens for the echo of your feet
In crowded mart or silent lonely street;
Beneath the molten copper of the dawn,
Under the noon when night is far withdrawn,
It seeks a glimpse of you, however fleet,
Or dreams of you, to find remembrance sweet,
When twilight floods the western sky with fawn.

Never another trod its old grim ways
With half your grace; no other ever passed
With laughter when the sky was overcast,
And so with sunshine filled the gloomy days;—
If the great city, brooding, thinks of you,
Light of the Vanished Years, what must I do?

YOUR GIFTS

O H, do not blame me that I bear
The things you gave me everywhere,
That faith gleams like a candle set
In dawn and in the violet
Of twilight; that the city street
Flowers like a garden old and sweet
Since you have shown me how to find
Happiness blown along the wind,
And how to gather from life's slope
Blossoms of heartsease and of hope.
I need not raise my eyes above
Longer to see the Perfect Love,
Or seek it in some distant clime
Beyond the purple Hills of Time.
You taught me how to find Love's face
In every sphere and every place,
And that by giving others joy
My own would be without alloy.

WINDOWS

GOD opened windows in my house of life
Through which each day I might look up to Him.
Sometimes a bit of snow on a bare limb,
Or sea-swept rocks clear cut as with a knife,
Yet full of beauty, these revealed His face;
Sometimes He fashioned windows out of flowers,
Or painted rainbows in the cool gray showers
Which should disclose of His great love a trace.

God opened many windows, but at length
Merged all in one; He took the sun and stars,
The songs of birds, the old yet ever new
Laughter of wind and wave, joy, hope and strength,
High courage, purity that nothing mars;
I see Him now through beauty that is you.

I COUNT THE HOURS

I COUNT the hours till I may see your face;
They hang like beads upon Time's silver string;
Dull, heavy beads without a hint or trace
Of light or coloring.

I count the hours till we shall meet again,
Then every one will be to me a flower.
Fraught with a fragrance that can banish pain—
A perfect, joy-filled hour.

I WILL REMEMBER NO UNLOVELY THING

I WILL remember no unlovely thing;
The trusts betrayed, the days when faith seemed vain,
The friend who proffered me a cup of pain,
All these shall be forgotten, I will sing;
My thoughts shall soar like meadow-larks in spring
Up and away, no more shall grief remain,
But like the joy of sunlight after rain
My recollections shall sweet solace bring.

The little beauties of the common day—
These are enough, these make my faint heart glad;
The moonbeams glancing on the garden walls,
The silver symphony of waterfalls,
And lilac scent borne on the winds of May;
Thinking upon these things who could be sad?

YOUR HEART WAS LIKE A GARDEN-CLOSE

YOUR heart was like a garden-close to me
And long I hoped to gain admission there;
I used to fancy all its ways were fair
And all its blossoms thoughts of purity;
I dreamed that if I entered I should see
Fruits of endeavor, aspirations rare,
Yet paused irresolute; I did not dare
To force the gateway, and I held no key.

There came those who had been inside and said
Weeds choked the flowers, that the trees were dead,
Withered by folly and the blight of sin,
At last I knew what key would let me in—
The key of faith in you—I went to find
The very beauty that I had in mind.

THE SEARCH

SO many years you have been gone,
Yet with each flowering of the dawn
All softly to myself I say,
"Perhaps he will return to-day,
He who has kept so long away!"

I think to find you when the spring
Comes with a burst of blossoming,
And when the winds of June go by,—
Those rovers of the earth and sky,
It seems that then you must be nigh.

I look for you in sun and shower,
I ask of bird and bee and flower,
I search amid the laughing trees,
I fling a question to the breeze
And tell my secret to the seas.

And though I cannot find a trace
Of you in any clime or place,
Yet would I seek my whole life through
If at its close I might but view
That other self which once was you.

THE LOVE OF YOU

THE love of you is like a flame in me,
It burns more brightly every passing hour,
A flame that holds the fragrance of a flower,
A singing flame that flares with melody;
It is a light that none may ever see,
And yet a fire of beauty and of power;
It is my glory, benison and dower,
This love of you—and it will ever be.

The love of you is like a jewel set
Within my heart; the bitter yearning years
Fade out beneath its gleams of gold and blue;
My days are tinged with rose and violet
And touched with joy that has no room for tears
Because I know I have the love of you.

THE HOUSE OF DREAMS

A LITTLE back from the street it stands,
Where the sunlight flashes in shining bands
Over its gables and through its trees,
Stirred by a wandering wraith of breeze;
Laughter echoes along its hall,
Love has walked by its garden wall
Where the hydrangea blossoms blow
In summer white as the winter's snow.
Many the folk who go by its door,
Many the folk that have passed of yore
Who saw just a plain house standing there—
No more. To us it is ever fair,
For all in life we have counted dear
Its heart has sheltered many a year;
Beneath its roof hide the glints and gleams
Of those frail, intangible things called dreams,
And though in the days that are to be
We may walk there only in memory,
On the road that runs beyond the skies
Another House of Dreams will rise—
The counterpart of this house on earth—
To hold new joy and to harbor mirth,
Where the love we dreamed of yet never knew
Will bloom in our House of Dreams come true.

WHERE EARTH'S WAYS ARE LAUGHTER

OH, I am going back to bide where all earth's ways
are laughter,
Laughter of sunlight on the hills, of valley and of
stream,
Of cool green winds that fleet across the smiling
meadows after
The pirouetting butterflies that dart and soar
and gleam!

Oh, I am going back to stray where all earth's ways
are gladness,
Gladness of little leaves that dance upon the
maple bough,
Of feathered folk whose melodies are never touched
with sadness,
Of ringing song that follows down the field behind
the plow!

Oh, I am going back to be where all earth's ways
are glowing
With happiness, where one keeps step with joy
the whole day through;
What wonder that my heart's a-thrill with a high
hope in knowing
That I am going back to walk May's shining paths
with you!

THE FLOWER OF MEMORY

I WANDERED down the lane of memory
Seeking to pluck some flower that I might keep
Before dim recollection fell asleep
And would no more reveal the past to me;
There were so many blossoms, such a sea
Of color seemed to billow and to sweep
About me that I scarce knew what to reap,
And what to leave in dull obscurity.

I paused a moment; suddenly I knew
I was as one who, searching, finds the keys
To some lost paradise; I quite forgot
The other flowers of other memories;
I only saw your laughing eyes of blue
Smile up at me and say, "forget-me-not!"

POSSESSIONS

SO many lovely things are mine to-day:
These wide hot acres dreaming in the sun
With scent of clover sweet as cinnamon;
These paths that twist and wind and dart away
As if at hide and seek they fain would play
With the old country road; frail cobwebs spun
Like lace upon the grasses one by one;
The soothing music of the winds that stray
Among old trees that tiptoe down the lane
Like frail green phantoms, and beyond, above
The filtered silver that the river spills,
Across the rippling green expanse of plain,
Beautiful, calm and steadfast as God's love,
The purple ridges of the rising hills.

A GARDEN ETCHING

THERE is a garden where the bee-balm burns
Like the last embers of the sunset fires,
Where sunbeams fill the scarlet poppy-urns
And sapphire larkspur lift their slender spires.

Petunias purple as the paths of sleep
Flutter with pansies bright as butterflies
Where in the spring the English violets creep
And star the garden with their azure eyes.

No rosemary for remembrance grows here,
And yet not one gay blossom can forget
A little lad who one long distant year
Romped in these ways amid the mignonette.

A man, he sometimes wanders here again
Half carelessly, yet with a careful tread,
Little he knows what sharp exquisite pain
The flowers feel as he bends above a bed.

Often they weep for him the long night through,
Though in the man they find nor flaw nor lack;
The one who tends them calls their teardrops "dew,"
Nor knows they mourn a child who comes not back.

MY LITTLE LAD

SOMETIMES I see him at the hint of fall,
Or hear the ripple of his running feet
Echo along the windy village street
As the old school-house bell begins to call;
Sometimes the ways of winter hold him thrall;
He coasts and skates, each hour is full of sweet;
From sun to sun the time seems all too fleet,
He wishes day would never end at all!

But when the winds of spring blow back again
And crocus cups are lifted to the dawn,
Oh, then of all the year is he most glad!
I see him playing ball down in the lane—
And yet when I would seek him he has gone,
For he is but a dream—my little lad.

WHY

SO many summers I went down this way—
Why is it that I never knew before
That crimson and blue morning-glories sway
About your open door?

The white hydrangeas toss along the wall
With tints of pink caught from the heart of dawn;
Why did their loveliness not hold me thrall
In days which now are gone?

Why does the old barn where the woodbine clings,
Where as a child you clambered high and low,
Beguile me now with shadowy whisperings,
And tales of long ago?

And why have I, who looked upon your face
Through years of perfect comradeship and true,
Only to-day perceived the subtle grace—
The beauty that is you?

THE GARDEN

THE air is redolent with sweet perfumes;
The spirals of the larkspur toss blue spray
Against the garden wall, where yesterday
The stately lilacs waved their purple plumes.
Yonder the tall Madonna lily blooms,
And roses climb in radiant array
Over a trellis where the sunbeams play;
A lustrous golden light the place illumines.

The sun sinks lower in a glowing sky;
As twilight falls, the fireflies' fairy lamps
Gleam from the grasses, washed with dewy damps.
Fireflies of heaven shine the stars above;
The Keeper of the Garden hangs them high
As altar lights of His undying love.

SUMMER TWILIGHT

W ANING day on the quiet hills falling
In petals of yellow and crimson light;
Above, the wheeling killdee calling
Into the violet vault of night.

Sunset tints in the blue lake burning,
Like water-lilies of myriad hue;
A lone, white line of cattle turning
Back to cool pastures drenched with dew.

Vesper bells in the village chiming,
And then, ethereal, faint and far,
Up the sky's blue stairway climbing—
Heaven's firefly, the evening star.

THOUGH IT IS LONG SINCE MARGUERITE
WAS HERE

THOUGH it is long since Marguerite was here,
Yet when June's blue-gold winds blow as of yore
And stir the columbine that, spear on spear,
Shakes pink and purple bells beside the door,
The garden and the house are full of her,
One almost hears the echo of her feet
Along the halls where once her footsteps were
And where her laughter rang out clear and sweet.

Shadowy thoughts of her still linger here,
Gay beads she strung lie on the bureau there,
The pictures and the books she counted dear,
The last bright band that bound her shining hair.
Her favorite flower, the pansy, lifts its face
Out in the yard, and lemon lilies bloom
With all their fragrance and familiar grace
Like little lanterns in a great green room.

Garden and house still vibrate with her name,
And yet the folk who wander up and down
Do not remember that she went or came
Along the shady streets of this old town;
The neighbors never think of her at all,
But in the yard the fragrant mignonette
Still blooms for her beside the sunny wall
And the rosemary will not soon forget.

THE FAIREST THINGS

THE fairest things are those that silent come;
You may not hear the first approach of morn,
And though you listen as the golden sum
Of hours fade into dusk, no sound is borne.

When the stars dance on high no bugles blow;
The footsteps of the flowers fall silently,
As softly come the blossoms of the snow;
And clouds float by in pale tranquillity.

No voices herald moonlight on a lake;
The silvery dew is still; these gifts are given
As quietly as Christ, who for our sake
Was sent to us, the greatest gift of heaven.

Tenderly now, as in the yesterday,
He leads earth-weary children in His way.

AT A RAILWAY STATION

HERE night is turned to day with gleam and glare
Of lights that burn unceasingly, the place
Throbs with the myriad footsteps of the throng.
Here granite arch and pillar and facade
Echo the distant din of giant wheels
As the huge engines enter and depart.
Here pain of parting and the ecstasy
Of fond hearts reunited may be seen;
Here are the mysteries of joy and woe.
Few are the actors on life's varied stage
Who do not sometime pass within the door
Of a vast railway station, but not one
May cease his work and throw aside his mask,
Seeking the portal of that distant land
By some called Paradise, but he must come
To the one station that the world calls death,
And yet through death all go to larger life.
Thus as one waits to hail an absent friend
In a great terminal of this world's mold,
So I, when death's dark threshold has been crossed,
Will wait with patience, asking only this—
That you, who reached the gateway long before
I knew your going, will be watching there
To greet me gladly, as I would greet you.

THE AUBURN ROAD

IF you would loose the cloak of care
Come from your dim abode,
Leave toil and tasks behind and fare
Along the Auburn road.

Above it and on either hand
Song, sun and shadow dart;
It seems the path to fairy-land,
The highway of the heart.

It wends where apple-blossoms blow
In gusts of pink and white,
Through fields of drifting cherry snow
Wrought out of silver light.

It clambers up across the hills
That rise to reach the blue,
And harks the bobolink as he spills
His bell-notes down the dew.

It dips and drops down ways that wind
Where laughing waters break
In mimic waves that fain would find
The margin of a lake.

There when the lantern of the sun
In misty gold is set
The curtains of the night are spun
In dusks of violet.

There all of life lifts hymns of praise,
Forest and flower and sod
Seem but to live that they may raise
Sweet gratitude to God.

You may fling down your earth-born load
On its green bordered breast
If you will take the Auburn road
Into the windy west.

TO CHICAGO

SOME hear your tumult, hear the shriek and jar
Of siren, and the clang of truck and car;
I never sense the noise, such sweet release
Lies in the lands beyond you, and such peace.

Some say that clouds of smoke and soot and grime
Hang over you and shroud you half the time;
I never see the dust, I only see
You as the gate I pass through to be free.

Some whisper that no beauty lurks in you,
That you hold much unholy and untrue;
I find you no less lovely, for you seem
To be the doorway leading to my dream.

Beyond your blackened wall and tower and dome
Rise the far mountains of my western home,
And so I love you with a love like fire,
Reaching through you the place of my desire.

SPRING IN MONTANA

I REMEMBER how the spring came up across
Montana's mountains,
The smiling spring, the ardent spring, with sunlight
in her hair;
She freed the prisoned brooks until they laughed like
living fountains
And flung their joyous messages upon the amber
air.

I remember how she wove a scarf of blades and tufts
of grasses
To veil the barren foothills and the rolling reach of
plain,
And how the crystal winds blew down the rugged
peaks and passes
And whispered through the canyons that her feet
had come again.

I remember how she called the feathered folk to slope
and valley,
And how the wild duck skimmed along the river's
silver edge,
And how the grouse went drumming down the wood's
dim-lighted alley,
Or flocks of wild geese cut the sky, a silent wingèd
wedge.

I remember how Lake Selish, like a mirror in the high-
lands

Caught from the eyes of April something of their
azure hue,

And like a giant sapphire that had dropped from out
the skylands

Lay shimmering and glimmering and wavering with
blue.

Oh, I have seen the spring come up with all her shin-
ing booty,

Where'er her footsteps touch the earth her wander
ways are fair,

But no land save the west land catches half her golden
beauty—

Oh, I recall Montana and I would that I were there!

THE SEA

FOREVER changeless and yet full of change,
A vast expanse of beryl and of blue,
A mellow mingling of the old and new,
A great voice chanting anthems sweet and strange;
Who has not known the sorrow of the sea
And seen its tears, like jewels, tossed on sand,
Or heard wild waves, receding from the strand,
Laugh with a hollow haunting harmony?

For æons it has sung, until it seems
A lyric link between the yesterday
And void to-morrows when man may fulfill
The words of Him that fell like living beams
Of light on earth's dim doubt and dark dismay,—
Who whispered to the waters, "Peace, be still!"

BURNT LANDS

AS one who views burnt lands and desolate,
Seeing scarred blackened shells where trees once
stood,

Glimpsing the dreary stretches of a wood
Which but a few days since stood green and straight;

So I look on my fire-scourged heart to-day
And find its blossoms singed and scorched with pain,
Scarce one slight flower permitted to remain,
All swept by one relentless hand away.

Full well I know that spring's eternal flame
Will light the burnt lands, making new life start,
And Love may plant new blossoms in my heart,
Yet nothing can be ever quite the same.

SACRIFICE

I HAVE gone hungry that you might be fed,
Shabby that you might be clothed.
I have kept watch that you might sleep;
While I thought only of you, you turned away to seek a
fairer face and whiter hands,
My face was sad and my hands were hardened with toil
for you;
I waited a long time for you to return to me—
Now you have come back,
And each day you tell me of the sacrifices you have made
for me—

Sometimes I wonder:
What is sacrifice?

CANDLE AND CROSS

YOU are at once my candle and my cross,
The light I carry and the load I bear;
A beam of living love, a weight of care,
Possession and irreparable loss
Are mine in you; aslant each dawning day
One long gray shadow falls, yet when the night
With blue-black blur would curtain earth from sight
In the still dark your taper throws its ray.

My lap is filled with burning bitter-sweet,
And every hour the berries brim my hand
Because of you; yet would I look above
With gratitude, still would my weary feet
Plod on toward you, who made me understand
The beauty and the magnitude of love.

DECISION

I WONDER will you never understand,
Who took me by the hand,
And led me far into an alien land—
I wonder can I never make you see—
(Glad as the wind was I, ah, glad and free!)
The weary longing in the heart of me?

I wonder what will stir you from your sleep,
Should I my vigil keep,
Or should I leave you folded close and deep
In slumber, would you wake if I were gone?
Dear, does the very arm you lean upon
Hide from your eyes the glory of the dawn?

I do not ask the presence of my hills,
Nor heed the throbs and thrills
Of the mysterious wind's voice as it fills
The valley—I need not blue sky above,
(These beauteous things which you know nothing of!)
But I shall go unless I have your love.

SINCERITY

I HAVE grown weary covering with words
The tears, the heart-aches and the burning pain,
Even my best endeavors are but vain;
Oh, I would listen to the song of birds
Far from this place, and look on hills as blue
As skies that bend above them, I would speak
The truth again, nor stifle it and seek
With artifice to cover it from view!

Play with your puppets if you will and must,
And call me what you may—a fool and blind;
Your tallest towers will crumble into dust
And all your knowledge cannot ease your mind
Until you know the truth, and so are free—
I would be gone, you have no need of me.

WE FAILED EACH OTHER

WE failed each other, you and I,
 Little remains to be said or done;
We must plod on as the days go by,
 Wearily, one by one.

We failed each other; to-day we know
 The dreary depths of a dark, dull pain,
Yet we can strive as we forward go
 Never to fail again.

GAIN IN LOSS

BEFORE you came I dreamed that we would go
Along these ways together hand in hand,
Like children wandering through fairyland;
Each day would be a joy and we should know
A perfect comradeship; it was not so,
Ere you were here you made me understand
That all the little things which I had planned
Were meaningless, for you went to and fro
Gladly without me; when the clouds closed in
About my door, how swift you turned away!
You shrank from pain as blossoms from the heat;
How could I know I lost you but to win
A glimpse of paradise, a breath of May,
A flower that with the years grows but more sweet?

I THOUGHT I HAD OUTLIVED MY PAIN

I THOUGHT I had outlived my pain,
For when, on hurrying feet,
I passed the house that you had known
Your memory made it sweet.

But when I came to my own door
Where you had never been
All the old sorrow met me there
And I could not go in.

NOW THE SUMMERTIME IS DONE

NOW the summertime is done,
Now the goldenrod is spun
Into graceful yellow torches that reflect a glowing
sun.

Now the hills are hung with haze,
Now the crickets chant their praise
Unto Him who holds in keeping all the mellow nights
and days.

Now the cattle wander through
Upland pastures dipped in dew
Where the pink-gilled meadow mushrooms lift their
round white heads to view.

Now sweet fodder fills the stalls
Of the old barn, ere frost falls,
And the rustle of the field-mice echoes up and down
the walls.

Now the woodbine in the lane
Glimmers with a crimson stain,
And the wind among the lindens chants a sorrow-
soft refrain.

Now from slender beryl stems
Jewel-weed drops dainty gems
Fashioned out of gleaming topaz fit for fairy diadems.

Peace and plenty brood supreme
Over valley, hill and stream,
And the land lies wrapt in sunshine golden as the
light of dream.

CONSOLATION

THE hills will soon be hung with haze,
The sunlight faint and fleet,
And though I love the autumn ways
And find them more than sweet,
My heart harks to the time of year
When apple-blossoms blow
Pink as cloud-flowers when day is near,
Silver as drifting snow.

Sometimes when tasks which heap my hand
Are done or laid aside,
Swift as a bird across the land
My thoughts fly far and wide;
But ever when the sun dips down,
A great rose in the blue,
My fancy flits to a far town
Where bides a breath of you.

For once you came at twilight time
To share with me a joy
Eternal as a ceaseless chime
Which nothing can destroy;
Once when the apple-blossom foam
Went floating down the wind
With you I turned my face toward home
And left all care behind.

Though I may not go back again
To walk the paths of spring,
I shall not feel the poignant pain
Which once life seemed to bring;
The opal of remembrance
Is mine to hold, to keep,
To cherish till the time I chance
To drift away in sleep.

AT FLUSH OF FALL

AT flush of fall you come to me again,
You come to me from out the Long Ago
When lindens light their lanterns in the lane
And maples their first touch of crimson show.

When hazes haunt the hills and drift below
To veil the valley and the distant plain
I think of you who loved September so—
At flush of fall you come to me again.

For some these days seem dark and full of pain,
For me joy floats down all the winds that blow,
Sweeter than melody of falling rain
You come to me from out the Long Ago.

The roadsides glimmer where the asters grow
Like amethysts strung on an emerald chain,
And goldenrod waves row on gleaming row
When lindens light their lanterns in the lane.

The cheerful crickets chant a clear refrain
Before the silent coming of the snow
When harvesters are gathering their grain
And maples their first touch of crimson show.

You who held all the fire and glint and glow
The brightest autumn ever can attain
Seem nearer now—this only do I know
I find all things for which my heart is fain
At flush of fall.

AS THE YEARS GROW DIM

WE shall remember as the years grow dim
And other things of earth fade from our sight,
We shall remember one wet autumn night
When the rain-wind was rising like a hymn
About the quiet house that seemed to brim
With cheer and warmth and steadfast mellow light,
When in our hearts the fire of love burned bright,
Though all without the door was gray and grim.

We shall remember, for in the To Be
It will be given us to live again
Those hours in a land beyond the skies;
Then we shall see, as now we may not see,—
We who grope blindly through a maze of pain,—
That earth may borrow hours from Paradise.

ONCE ON AN AUTUMN EVENING

ONCE on an autumn evening long ago
In a hill-town that blossomed by a stream
As any flower might—once I caught a gleam
From out your eyes that since have called me so;
I stifled longing; how was I to know
One distant day you would become my dream?
Or that you would be life's great living theme,
The one stanch rock amid the ebb and flow
Of circumstances rolling like a sea
About me till I could not find the shore?
You never spoke of love, and yet for me
You did the things no one had done before:
Beautiful deeds that made mere words seem vain,
While for your kindness I gave only—Pain!

BITTER-SWEET

ONCE when a child I ran to pick
Sprays of these berries bright,
To hang them high about the hall
Like lanterns all alight.

But ah, to-day I never go
Along the windy lane,
My house is full of Bitter-Sweet—
I need not pluck again!

SINCE I HAVE FELT THE MORNING ON MY
FACE

SINCE I have felt the morning on my face
In that far country where keen breezes blow,
Since I have seen the fingers of the snow
Touch with white magic all things commonplace,
Since I have watched the hoar-frost weave its lace
Upon the windows as the sun sunk low,
Since I have glimpsed the glimmer and the glow
Of stars and moon hung in the vasts of space—

I would not pass an hour of winter-tide
In cities where the towering walls of stone
Shut out God's sky, where streets are loud with strife;
For me clean hills and meadows wild and wide,
The song of hidden streams, of trees wind-blown—
A fuller freedom and a larger life.

THE WHITE ROSE

SOMETIMES I fancy when it snows
And day seems like a silver light,
The sky is but a great white rose
That blossomed over night.

But since the earth had need of them
To hide her garb of gray and brown,
The great white rose bends on its stem
And drops its petals down.

WE SHOULD BE KIND

WE should be kind to those who do not know
The joy we found and shared that winter day
When the winds laughed like children at their play,
And all the air was white with falling snow;
We only heed the glory and the glow
Of life, for us each month is turned to May,
But what of those who have not walked our way—
Do they find gladness everywhere they go?

We have seen dream become reality,
Yet our day passed as any day might pass
For those about us; still they do not see,
But gazing blindly through Life's looking-glass
Put stumbling blocks before their own tired feet—
We should be kind, whose lives are filled with sweet.

SECOND MAY

TO-DAY the world without is white with May,
A second May that fragile snowflakes bring,
Pear tree and apple in a pale array
Bloom as though touched by spring.

Within, the house seems steeped in candle light;
A subtle spell is cast upon the hour;
One wonders how this miracle of white
Came suddenly to flower.

I, going slowly down the quiet street
Where everything is garbed in silver hue,
Think of a bygone May whose hours were sweet,
And smile, remembering you.

THE APPLE TREES OF WESTMORELAND

THE apple trees of Westmoreland,
How white they blow to-day!
The filmy blossoms of the snow
Have filled their hands with May.

Each orchard path is drifted deep,
And gusty winds that call
From out the great heart of the north
Let showers of petals fall.

O you who long to see the spring
And hear her melodies,
Go walk to-day in Westmoreland
Amid the apple trees!

THE PATH OF DUTY

LONG I rebelled and would not set my feet
In Duty's path, but ever turned aside,
Seeking for ways I thought to find more wide,
Questing for things I thought to find more sweet.

I said: "Hard is this task I ought to do;
What shall I gain, if, working till the end,
I take this broken bit of chain and mend
Its sundered links and make them firm and new?

"Cannot another do it quite as well,
Aye, better; wherefore should my life be spent
In thankless labor, why was this work sent?
I want it even less than I can tell!"

There came a voice that whispered down the wind
In answer to my cry; it bade me turn,
Beseeching me, "Take up the task you spurn,
In it alone shall you true solace find."

At last I went, obedient to the call,
And what a glorious harvest did I reap!
I found the road was neither rough nor steep,
And Duty's path the fairest path of all.

AS IN A DREAM

AS in a dream I walk the round of days;
Dim grows the light that glowed upon the hill,
And all the little winds of spring are still,
There is a shadow cast on sunny ways;
I see but darkly through the glass of life,
The things which were will never come again;
Since I have raised my eyes and looked on Pain
My heart has bled beneath his cruel knife.

“Through a glass darkly, but then face to face.”
O Lord, unveil my eyes that I may see,
Nor blindly go, nor sadden others’ hours
Because I have a grief! Not by Thy grace
It came, I made the load which weighs on me;
Thy sun shines through my self-inflicted showers.

THE THINGS I HAVE NOT HAD

I PRAY I may be glad
For the things I have not had;

Glad that somewhere they wait,
And that near, or far, or late,

I shall find them, lingering so,
In the dawn or even-glow

With never a trace of tears
Left by the passing years.

They know nor time nor space,
For they have not taken place.

Love which I never knew,
Beautiful, pure and true

Awaits, and the distant gleams
From the hearth-fires of my dreams

Which may one day come to be
Such a bright reality.

Glad for the past am I,
And for to-day's blue sky,

But I am more than glad
For the things I have not had.

THE UNKNOWN NAME

NO man yet knows the glorious name I bear
Save one who granted it, and even he
Knows not its full significance to me.

He little dreams that at my mother's knee,
When, as a child, I said my evening prayer,
Wistful, I asked for this, the name I bear!

No man may guess I bear this glorious name;
Not even he who gave it me one day
Could hear my heart sing like a bird in May,
He never thought that I was wont to pray
In maidenhood as childhood, still the same,
Wistful, that I might bear this glorious name!

I bear a glorious name no man may know
Save he who has bestowed it, and alas!
He sees but darkly through life's looking glass,
Nor guesses that, a woman now, I pass
With prayer upon my lips and head bowed low,
Asking that all my glorious name may know.

THE CHEAT

LIFE is cheating you,
Pouring her counterfeit coins into your lap;
You think they are gold because they glitter;
You never test them to see if they ring true.
Yes, you are letting life cheat you.

Nothing remains to be said.
You would not hear if I were to warn you;
If you should hear you would not listen;
If you should listen you would not understand;
If you understood you would do nothing
Just as you are doing now;
You would go on letting life cheat you.

Sometime you will have a new vision,
A finer perception,
A keener sense of discernment.
You will discover that your heap of coins is worthless,
That your house is falling—
The house that you tried to build without a foundation;
You will have nothing left,
Nothing but the realities you scorn.

When this time comes I ask but one thing of you;
When you realize that you have been cheated
Do not say that it was I who cheated you,
That I should have told you, warned you—
God give you the wisdom you now lack,
Wisdom to see that you cheated yourself.

THE CHAIN

LIFE fashions every man a chain
Whereon he strings his beads;
Some may be gifts from others, some
Are his own deeds.

I once knew one who gave me tears
To hang upon my chain;
Daily I strove to shake them off,
But strove in vain.

There came another by who tossed
Me beams from out the sun;
I did not know the worth of them
Till all was done.

When they were strung upon my chain
I could not find a tear;
Instead a thousand rainbows gleamed
Radiant and clear.

Each one of us who walks earth's ways
May scatter sunbeams too,
To tint his brother's beads of tears
With rose and blue.

IN EXILE

I MAY not walk in Kirkland
Now that the snow lies deep
And the white winds of winter
Have sung the flowers to sleep.

I may not walk in Kirkland
Now that the sleigh-bells ring,
And summer's feathered songsters
Have long since ceased to sing.

I may not walk in Kirkland
Now calm cold stars look down
Across vast crystal spaces
And over Kirkland town.

But I may dream of Kirkland,
And dreaming, I may see
Her burning, brimming beauty
Through eyes of memory.

THE HILLS OF CLOUD

LAST night I had my hills again,
For just before the sun had set
Below the brown expanse of plain
In mists of rose and violet,
Across the far horizon's rim
Great cloud banks clambered up the sky,
Blue-gray and shadowy and dim
They drifted slowly by.

Seen in the fleet and fading light
They seemed the distant hills I love,
Climbing to touch the sky's blue height,
Wrapt in a peace man knows not of;
And as of old I drew new power
From them to overcome all ills—
I had not known until that hour
How I had missed my hills.

WHEN RAIN-WINDS BLOW

WHEN rain-winds blow and wrap the day
In mists of silver and of gray,
When the last autumn's leaves whirl by
In gusts of brown and yellow dye,
With rain and leaves my thoughts are blown
Straight to the land that is my own,
Where, soft as sleep, they flutter down
Into the heart of Kirkland town.
Again an old house comes in sight
With evergreens to left and right,
Guarding like sentinels the door
Which I was wont to pass of yore.
Again the garden claims my gaze
Where once I saw red poppies blaze,
And watched great sunflowers rise and set
Behind the clumps of mignonette.
I hear the wind run down the hill
With whistle keen and clear and shrill,
I hear the rain begin to fall,
And see sere leaves blown by the wall—
I will be one with leaves and rain,
The wind shall waft me home again.

THE HILLS OF KIRKLAND

THE emerald hills of Kirkland
Climb up to greet the spring,
And lift their laughing heads aloft
Beneath her blossoming;

The golden hills of Kirkland
Climb up to touch the blue
When summer veils the valleys in
Her sunlight and her dew;

The purpling hills of Kirkland
Climb up to reach the sun
When autumn lights the lanterns of
The maples one by one.

Come rain or shine in Kirkland,
Green-or-white-mantled ground,
A beauty bides in Kirkland
That nowhere else is found;

And yet the sons of Kirkland—
How far afield they roam!
They search the world for that which hides
Amid the hills of home!

THE PLAYGROUND OF THE SUN

HERE in these fields by the Oriskany,
Here is the summer playground of the sun,
Here when the blue-gold day is scarce begun
The light envelopes them caressingly;
It lingers, warms and glows and laughs with glee,
Touching the purpling grass tops one by one,
Till the wide acres steam and hot scents run
Down the hot winds that rise and drop and flee.

Wild morning-glories riot in the corn
And ox-eyed daisies dot the uncut hay,
Here bobolinks are merry all the day,
And locusts sing their drowsy song of heat;
The land lies sun-steeped, and its dreams are sweet,
Sweet as the day when first the world was born.

HOW GLAD I AM

HOW glad I am that I may still return
To see September steal across the hills
In that one place of all the world most dear;
To watch the bending barberries blush and burn,
While asters weave light dances by the rills,
And crickets chirr their ceaseless song of cheer!

How glad I am that I may still go back
To visit orchards where the apples fall,
Golden and red, to hide amid the grass;
To see a flush suffuse the green sumach,
And walk through pastures, where, like elfins small,
The mushrooms raise umbrellas as I pass!

How glad I am that I may still retrace
My steps to the old homestead set apart
In ways where peace eternally abides;
Where, in the garden, quaint bright blossoms grace
The paths, and where the vagrant gold bees dart,
Seeking the honey that each flower-heart hides!

How glad I am that home still holds a lure,
That sweet simplicity will still beguile,
That though the city thralls those dear to me,
My thought is there where winds blow free and pure,
And I love best to see the sunlight smile
On the broad breast of the Oriskany!

THE SUNSET OF THE YEAR

IF you would know the glory that October days
 can bring,
A gleaming golden glory which transfigures every-
 thing,
Come on some azure morning, fresh with frost and
 crystal clear,
And climb the hills of Kirkland in this sunset of the
 year.

Below you and above you and as far as eye can see
Amber and bronze and crimson lights will burn in
 bush and tree,
The valley will be like a bowl of brilliant autumn
 bloom
With goldenrod, and asters like the purple twilight
 gloom.

But, oh, the hills, those far flung hills that rise to
 reach the blue,
Their silent world-old majesty will thrill you through
 and through!
All months touch them with loveliness, but when the
 first leaves fall
In gusts of red and russet, they are loveliest of all.

Think not that you know Beauty, you have only
seen a trace
Of her if you have sought for her in other clime or
place,
But if you come to Kirkland you will surely find her
here
Upon these haze-hung heights in this,—the sunset
of the year.

THE RIVER

LIKE a ribbon of sapphire
The Oriskany winds between emerald banks,
Flashing, leaping,
Tossing its pearls of spray into the air where they
 hover a moment—
Tiny iridescent globes of light,
Then fling themselves upon the breast of the river,
The shining, billowing breast of the river,
Blue in the sunlight,
Silver in the shadows where the willows lean down to
 kiss it
And trail their thin fingers in its quivering crystal.
Singing, the Oriskany dances to meet the Mohawk,
Lifting its smiling face to the farm lands as it flows
 through them;
Joyful, irradiant, brimming with happiness, it fulfills
 its mission,
Which is to make the world more beautiful for others.

When man, like the laughing river,
Sings on his way, filling others' lives with sunshine,
He will find his own life bright, beautiful, brimming
 with happiness.

THE LITTLE TOWN

O LITTLE village in the Kirkland hills,
Strangely akin you seem to a far town
That has for many centuries worn a crown,
Whose very name holds balm for all our ills;
To-day at thought of you my being thrills
As in my fancy I go up and down
Your elm-arched streets where now green springs
from brown
And every garden gleams with daffodils.

Oh little village full of life's great things,
I see you, like a blazing diadem,
Set on the hills; you are the fount whence springs
My hope, my strength, you are my living gem;
I found the Christ in you, and to you clings
My love; you are my Town of Bethlehem.

DAY BY DAY

DAWN, day, the slow descending dark,
Dark, dawn, the swift ascending day,
Toil for a time, then candle light—
Tasks laid away.

*Despite the little that remains
So many things may come to be,
More than have passed the closing gate
Of memory.*



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